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**LINKING STRATEGY TO THE OPERATIONAL ART:
DOES OUR CURRENT ALLIANCE BASED STRATEGY
INHIBIT REALISTIC CAMPAIGN PLANNING?**

**A Monograph
by**

**Lieutenant Colonel Gerald R. Thiessen
Corps of Engineers**

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**School of Advanced Military Studies
United States Army Command and General Staff College
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

**Advanced Operational Studies Fellowship
88-89**

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SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED			1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS		
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY			3. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF REPORT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.		
2b. DECLASSIFICATION / DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE					
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)			5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)		
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION School of Advanced Military Studies, USAC&GSC		6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable) ATZL-SWV	7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION		
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas 66027-6900			7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)		
8a. NAME OF FUNDING / SPONSORING ORGANIZATION		8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable)	9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER		
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)			10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS		
			PROGRAM ELEMENT NO.	PROJECT NO.	TASK NO.
11. TITLE (Include Security Classification) Linking Strategy to the Operational Art: Does Our Current Alliance Based Strategy Inhibit Realistic Campaign Planning?					
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) LTC Gerald R. Thiessen, USA					
13a. TYPE OF REPORT Monograph		13b. TIME COVERED FROM _____ TO _____	14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) 31 March 1989		15. PAGE COUNT 52
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION					
17. COSATI CODES			18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) national strategy campaign sequels Coalition strategy deterrence limitations operational plans conventional war		
FIELD	GROUP	SUB-GROUP			
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) The purpose of this monograph is to determine the adequacy of our current, alliance based, conventional force strategy. The scope is limited to the application of force to achieve national objectives of deterrence and containment. The problem of maintenance of order in an anarchical system of states is set aside with minimal comment. The monograph begins with a review of the strategic context to examine the impact of evolution of the containment objective since Vietnam, changes in the distribution of national power, alliance stability and the nuclear balance. Next, the nature of deterrence is analyzed to distinguish the objective from the means to attain the objective. Then our current alliance based strategy, with emphasis on NATO, is compared to the strategic environment developed previously. This comparison reveals, what the author believes to be shortcomings in resources and campaign sequels. (continued)					
20. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT. <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS			21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED		
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL LTC Gerald R. Thiessen			22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code) (913) 684-2138		22c. OFFICE SYMBOL ATZL-SWV

Item 19. Continued

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SCHOOL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES

MONOGRAPH APPROVAL

Name of Student: Gerald R. Thiessen, LTC, Engineers

Title of Monograph: Linking Strategy to the Operational Art:
Does Our Current Alliance-Based Strategy
Inhibit Realistic Campaign Planning?

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Accepted this 15th day of May 1989

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ABSTRACT

LINKING STRATEGY TO THE OPERATIONAL ART: DOES OUR CURRENT ALLIANCE BASED STRATEGY INHIBIT REALISTIC CAMPAIGN PLANNING? by Gerald R. Thiessen, LTC, USA, 49 pages.

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Availability Codes	
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
I. Introduction.....	1
II. The Strategic Environment.....	5
III. The Nature of Deterrence.....	19
IV. The Limitations of Our Conventional Force Strategy...	25
V. The Resource to Overcome the Limitation.....	35
VI. The Required Evolution of the Strategy.....	39
VII. Conclusions.....	47
Bibliography.....	49

I. INTRODUCTION

The paramount national security objectives of the United States since the end of World War II have been, and continue to be, containment of Soviet expansion and deterrence of global, general war, nuclear or non-nuclear.(14;60) A third major objective, that of imposing order on an otherwise anarchical system of states, appears to be growing in importance with the increase in radical regimes, that are willing to engage in state sponsored terrorism.(14;552) With no intent to minimize the importance of this third objective, it will not be addressed here. In leaving the subject, it is worth noting that the Roman Empire was not destroyed by its superpower rival, the Parthians, but was consumed by barbaric border states, when it lost the ability, or will, to impose order on them.(11;169) However, the purpose of this paper is to examine military options to support the primary national security objectives of containment and deterrence. Accordingly, imposition of international order will only be addressed, where it is peripherally related to the former two objectives.

Deterrence and containment are highly interrelated, addressing the same threat, but are not always mutually supportive. Both objectives accept the status quo and are, therefore, defensive in nature. Through deterrence, one seeks to avoid war except to preserve vital interests.(14;28) Defining vital interests is fraught with a tangle of diplomatic and political issues. It is best set aside with an observation, that the list of things

over which the United States would risk global war is very short.

Before Vietnam, containment meant, that any Soviet sponsored aggression in the free world was encroachment on a vital interest, regardless of the relative importance of the threatened state to the United States.(14;68) This aspect of the containment strategy sets it at odds with deterrence. Crosspurposes of containment and deterrent objectives produced two limited wars, in which the United States attempted to walk the tightrope between containment of Communism and deterrence of a larger war. These wars, resulting in a tie and a defeat, were very unsatisfying to the American people. The facet of containment, which held, that resisting Soviet aggression was inherently a vital interest, ended in the aftermath of Vietnam, when President Nixon announced the Guam Doctrine, confirming what the American people had already decided: "that the United States would no longer automatically intervene against externally supported insurgencies." (14;76)

This major, new, political reality did not repeal the objective of containment, but did precipitate a major change in the strategy to achieve it. Two primary reasons are evident for the survival of the objective. First, numerous bilateral and mutual treaty obligations, entered into in pursuit of containment, cannot be breached without serious consequences. Second, policy is shared by the belief, that no nation, not even one as large and rich as the United States, can exist with its institutions and

way of life intact without a community of states that have similar values, beliefs, institutions and lifestyles.(27;58) The validity of the latter reason could only be tested in the failure of the objective, but growing economic, political, cultural and security interdependence of the western democracies indicate the importance of the principle. This fundamental basis for security will insure, that containment is retained as a cardinal objective of United States security policy; even though, we will not necessarily risk war over every encroachment.

In addition to the allied states with strong ties to the United States, resource rich states that are vital to the global economy also appear to be secured from Soviet aggression by U. S. military force, if required.(14;406) More at risk in the post-Vietnam era are third world states with neither key resources, nor close ties to the United States. These states are not abandoned by containment, but their governments are unlikely to receive direct military intervention, especially, where the threat to their security is ambiguous as in the case of an externally supported insurgency.(14;76)

This dilemma leaves the principal support for containment within the diplomatic, economic and cultural components of national influence. The Defense Department has been grappling with a doctrine for military actions short of war, generally called Low Intensity Conflict (LIC), to support the new reality of the military component of containment in those regions and states, where the United States does not have vital interests. (39;3)

This new reality simplifies military strategic planning, considerably, compared to the period from the start of the Korean Conflict to the end of the Vietnam War. If one accepts that LIC is a doctrine for the use of military resources for diplomatic influence without direct application of U. S. Forces in a hostile environment, then LIC can, and should, be excluded from consideration as an element of U. S. war fighting strategy. Recognizing, that the applicability of LIC is a currently debated topic, (39:5) the fact that two Presidents have declined to intervene in two Western Hemisphere, Soviet sponsored insurgencies, seems to confirm, that LIC is a diplomatic support strategy, and not a war fighting strategy. The position that LIC is applicable to actions short of war in other than vital interest arenas will be the basis for the development of the remainder of this paper.

The remaining containment objectives, defense of our allies and defense of selected resource rich states, are much easier to integrate with the deterrence objective, than the broader global containment objective ever was. Now one can separate a more defined arena, in which war is deterred with a war fighting strategy from another arena in which competition for influence will not likely lead to commitment of U. S. military force. Thus, the war fighting strategy of the United States can be more focused on producing deterrence.

II. THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

Throughout the post war era, the Warsaw Pact or the Soviet Bloc has been the constant threat feature of a bipolar, security world. Recently, numerous security analysts have been assessing the possibility of a multipolar world.(15;538) Certainly, the power of both the United States and the Soviet Union has declined relative to their post war peaks. Both states have failed to win wars against superpower sponsored minor states. Both states have suffered a relative decline in global share of economic output. (15;441) The losses in relative position of the superpowers have brought on the nomination of Japan, Europe and China as successor states in a broader based set of first tier, power states.(15; 435) These predictions have merit and promise to make the future interesting, however, they aren't useful for current strategic, security analysis for several reasons.

Japan is, certainly, an economic superpower. This power gives Japan major influence throughout the world. However, since Japan has not rearmed, it can only exert influence, and lacks the ability to impose its will on other states. Europe has the population, economy, technology and military potential to be the dominate superpower in the world. Europe, however, is not a nation state, and is, culturally, far from becoming one. Far reaching continental cooperation agreements cannot change a culturally divided history for several generations. Europe is able to exert a military presence in concert only through NATO. European ability to do the same independent of Atlantic partners is doubtful.

The reason is simple. The larger states, Germany, France, Great Britain and Italy are too close in size and power to work in concert without a dominant state in alliance. This leaves China on the frequently mentioned list of successor super-power states. China, certainly, has the resources, population and homogeneous culture to become the dominant state on Earth. But presently, China is largely unrealized potential. Furthermore, her large, underemployed population may drag anchor on her ability to achieve any significant change in her status for a long time to come. The preceding observations simply indicate, that change in basic power distribution has not yet occurred. The United States and the Soviet Union still possess dominant air, land, sea and nuclear power. In an anarchical system of states potential power will remain potential until it is vested in a formidable military capability. The net result is that the present strategy must address a bipolar world with two centers of power, one in Moscow and one in Washington D. C. (15:538)

Even if one of the two current superpowers were eclipsed by a third state, it does not follow that the world would be converted from a bipolar to a multipolar condition. Since resources are divided unequally and randomly, there will always be a number one and a number two state. Those two states will be the base states for security alliances. This statement contains the implicit assumption that the nature of the relationship between the two most powerful states will be inherently adversarial. This assumption relies upon the balance of power theory of interna-

tional security relationships. If security is the aim for application of power as nearly all modern states proclaim, then a great state must always use its power to check the power of other great states. Logically, the number one and number two states would be opposed. If one of those two states should abdicate, as the United States has done during flights into isolationism, then the number three state will leap forward to fill the breach. Between the World Wars the United States relied on European balance of power and left her global responsibilities unattended. This proved to be unwise as World War II demonstrated but was credible at the time. Following World War II and decolonialization no other power was capable of being a credible check on perceived Soviet expansion. After initial demobilization the United States reluctantly responded with the standing forces, that she had historically shunned, in order to exercise global power. This inherent condition of paired power opposition is not necessarily inevitable, but escape from it would require evolution of the system of anarchical relations between sovereign nations. Evolution possibilities may be on the horizon in the forms of world order organizations, greater pluralism and greater interdependence. None of these social forces are presently sufficient to change perceptions of the need for security against subjugation by an unchecked power.

Clausewitz's analogy of war compared to Newtonian physics of two opposed forces is relevant.(5;77) There are no triangular fields of competition. All opposed sporting contests have but

two goalposts, goals or endzones. A third force cannot intervene on a battlefield unless it cooperates with one of the two preceding forces and opposes the other. The third force represents allies, either formal ones or allies of momentary convenience. Broader global distribution of national wealth will have much more impact on the nature of alliances, than upon the form of global security on a small and shrinking planet. The form is fixed as bipolar by the nature of combat. China's status, as a self-declared, nonaligned state, does not change the equation. As a secondary power with a military capability, she influences the defense planning of both the Soviets and the West. Since her threat posture is more credible to the Soviets, she represents an plus on the balance sheet of the West, regardless of alignment. (15:509)

Civil relationships between states drift between bipolar and multipolar models depending upon circumstances and the degree of tension attending international relations. In contrast, war is inherently a bipolar contest. Neither theoretical analysis from Clausewitz's physics analogy nor historical analysis support an alternative. This is obvious with respect to global conflict but is less defined with respect to regional conflicts. In the two global conflicts of this century the United States held the power to decide the war but that very power precluded avoiding those wars once they commenced. Regional conflicts are also bipolar with respect to the combatants. Nations that are diplomatically neutral, especially the superpowers, routinely intervene with

materiel, logistical and intelligence support. An interesting pattern emerges from the post-World War II conflicts. Those conflicts where East-West alignment was the primary issue (Korea, Vietnam, Ethiopia, Yemen, Angola and El Salvador) have tended to be protracted wars. Those wars where regional disputes were fundamental and East-West alignment was peripheral (Arab-Israeli, India-Pakistan and Falklands Wars) have tended to have very short periods of actual combat. The one exception to this was the Iran-Iraq War. In this exception it is probable that both superpowers had similar objectives to avoid concentration of power in radical regimes. This pattern is not based on enough data to be conclusive, but it does appear that bipolar security interests are a dominant influence of the character of conflicts that would otherwise appear to be multipolar.

Regional bipoles are extremely dangerous; because, they are always close to the flash point of a broader conflict between global bipolar pairs. Nations react with alarm when one of their allied states becomes involved in a subordinate bipolar conflict in which the nonparticipating allies have no direct interest. Because of the reaction, broad alliances have capability to inhibit states from crossing the threshold of war in subordinate, regional disputes. Since broad alliances suppress regional disputes, they have an inherent tendency to promote stability. Broader distribution of wealth and, therefore, potential power among nations runs counter to this by increasing the flexibility of states to shift alliances. Some would argue that shifting

alliances promotes stability because nothing is permanent; thus, a change doesn't produce undue alarm.(27:112) This simply does not fit the reality of the security nightmare that would flow from disintegration of NATO.

Large secondary states have many more options than small states with respect to alliances. Large states can risk running the gauntlet of changing sides or of nominal nonalignment. China left the Soviet Bloc with near impunity. A smaller Warsaw Pact state could conceivably now abandon the alliance as well, but would risk devastation of the kind suffered by Afghanistan to do so. Western alliances are much more persuasive, than coercive, compared to Soviet Alliances, but western alliance states still bear the risk of economic and political consequences for retreat from alliance status. Small states that form cross alliances out of the sphere of influence of one of the superpowers do so at great risk to their security. Cuba gained substantial diplomatic freedom of action by forming such a cross alliance. The gain is based on the gamble that deterrence will be maintained. If a global conflict should occur, Cuba's risk of devastation would be much greater than comparably sized Caribbean and Latin American states. Small states assume far less risk by pursuing a neutral strategy. These states are, inherently, at the mercy of the civility of larger surrounding states; for, they can only be neutral if they maintain no credible military capability. Nonaligned states with significant military capability have difficulty remaining neutral, regardless of their claim to neutrality. The

very existence of their military capability threatens the security of surrounding states, and will always be part of the latter's calculus.(27:367) While unarmed neutrality depends on the mercy of surrounding states, armed neutrality depends on the perceptions of surrounding states especially during hostilities. Spain and Sweden were able to maintain neutrality during World War II in spite of having substantial forces in geometrically favorable flank positions. They were able to do this due to the difficulty of their routes to intervention and by maintaining a force sufficient to deter attack without alarming the belligerent powers. Such a status may become attractive to our allies, however it has not served nations well if their territory is on natural invasion routes. Such a strategy is not likely to replace balance of power alliances as the mechanism for maintenance of world order. For it would be viable only if universally subscribed to by all nations with significant potential power. Armed neutrality in the absence of universal acceptance depends on aligned states serving as a check on application of power.

The most interesting, modern anomaly is the post war status of Japan. Japan behaves militarily as a neutral state but is, in fact, an allied state. Japan also possesses far greater wealth and global reach of influence than any nation has, ever before, been willing to risk on a neutralist strategy.(15:459) Japan could not pursue this strategy without the security guarantees of the United States.(15:459) The fact that she has been willing to risk her security to a culturally very different nation for so

long, is remarkable. The interesting alliance strategy question is whether this is a circumstance of Japan's unique military history, or is the start of a trend, that other potentially powerful states will follow. Clearly, the world would be safer if more nations could maintain such a security posture. The issue would be the increasingly important one of how to pay the bill for the common security that is produced when an armed state shares its deterrence shield with a nearly unarmed state.

Unbalanced defense postures among wealthy alliance states both promotes stability and is a source of potential fragmentation. Those states with greater dependence on alliance security, rather than on national security, have less freedom to change alliance. Conversely, the quarrelsome issue of burdensharing is exacerbated by the unbalanced security contributions. On balance, the security dependency issue would appear to outweigh by far the importance of burdensharing, but that may not be sufficient to be decisive in the arena of alliance politics.

At present, it is inconceivable that a Western Democracy would realign to the Soviet Bloc. If the Soviets proceed with promised civil reforms and adopt a less aggressive foreign policy, the possibility could arrive sooner than we might care to consider. This would be especially true if a period of economic difficulty coincided and caused increased domestic tension in affected Western States.

To avoid instability, alliances must follow strategies that are relevant to current security requirements of member states

and are accompanied by maximum cooperation in all spheres of international exchange, especially economic. If we are entering a period of reduced alliance stability, the Soviet Union bears greater risk of alliance breakdown than we do because their coercive alliances are less stable than are our persuasive alliances. However, being a nearly autarkic society with much less dependence on allied military contribution, the Soviets would suffer the lesser consequences from alliance disintegration.(15:5 08)

All of our major alliance treaties were formed when we possessed overwhelming nuclear superiority. We thought that we possessed the power to deter global conflict unilaterally. Based on this perceived capability, the United States formed a network of regional alliances to deter piecemeal aggression in different parts of the world.(14:465) The Korean Conflict demonstrated the need for the conventional deterrence and the limitations of the nuclear deterrence. The ambiguities of surrogate warfare, the national conscience and world opinion, combined, led the President to a decision not to escalate in spite of strong pressure from his theater commander to do so.(31:390) With the arrival of nuclear parity, the utility of the threat of escalation to deter a broad conflict eroded further.(14:226) Unfortunately, neither our regional treaties nor the alliances strategies that flow from those treaties reflect the reality that we now require global military support from our alliance partners to deter a broad conflict.(15:521)

It is extremely unlikely, that war in Europe could occur

without being accompanied by hostilities in the Pacific, but this is what our NATO strategy contemplates.(41:8) Unquestionably, we should have numerous firebreaks in our strategy for transition from peace to war, if deterrence should start to crumble in a period of tension. These firebreaks would include initial geographic containment. We cannot risk the consequences of war over a border clash, assassination of a political figure or other inflammatory incidents that could be defused. In all probability we would retreat from a superpower war even after significant loss of life or damage in a period of brinksmanship. After these measures are exhausted or in the face of a full scale invasion, where they would be obviously irrelevant, geographic containment is unlikely. It is so unlikely that the term horizontal escalation as used by those who advocate spreading a European war geographically is probably superfluous.(36:41) The rules of engagement that preserve the peace when potentially hostile vessels of war meet in international territory or at borders, are functional only if the would be combatants believe that the encountered opposite might shoot some day but not today. To have military forces of belligerents quietly observing rules of engagement in one part of the world while similar forces are locked in a death struggle in another theater is to expect steadier nerves than anyone has. This expectation ignores the moral domain of war. With standoff ranges of conventional weaponry approaching one thousand miles, the only way to avoid contact would be to evacuate all areas of the world that are not engaged in conflict.

If containment were militarily possible, the political feasibility of national leaders sending men to war in the jaws of Soviet strength while avoiding more approachable targets is dubious. Granted, a superpower war initiated outside of Europe would have a higher probability of not spreading to Europe than the obverse case because of the deterrent effect of the forces concentrated in Europe. However, the prospects are not good in any scenario for regional containment of a head to head superpower struggle. The controversial maritime strategy more aptly addresses the global nature of the war to be deterred, than does the collection of alliance based regional strategies. (36:39)

In order to have the most effective deterrence, the probable nature of the conflict to be deterred must be defined in realistic terms. Either existing alliance strategies must be broadened or a new alliance is needed to deal with the global aspect of a realistic strategy for deterrence. The former would be less antagonistic to the Soviet Union. The latter would be more straightforward to implement and would be more effective. Neither of these is likely to happen soon. Our allies are, generally, comfortable with regional pacts that protect their homelands and ignore the larger problem of global security. (6:66) This leaves the United States in the position of being the unilateral global strategist. We are supported with interdependent regional treaties, which we must, diplomatically, pretend are independent. We have not gained flexibility from this position, but have, instead, been inhibited by alliance sensitivities from fully inte-

strating our own strategy.

We need only a few global thinkers. If regionalization was the only diplomatically deadlocked aspect of western strategy, the problem would be less severe. Unfortunately, the implementation strategy affects the thinking of military and civilian leaders of all nations involved. To the extent that their vision of their mission environment is outmoded, we have a serious problem that cannot be corrected on mobilization day. If this is true, then deterrence is jeopardized by this lack of leader perspective to deal with a realistic war fighting strategy. That which exists can be discovered and, if discovered, can be used to advantage.

The rational basis for a stable alliance is the existence of a common interest that is more important than competing interests. In our alliances the common interest is collective security through deterrence of a common threat.(14:34) If the elements of this common interest are stable and not superceded by a competing interest that is more important than the common interest, then there is no reason why the alliance cannot remain stable through an era of change.

Diplomatic peace initiatives by the leader of the threat state, when combined with domestic political turmoil and economic chaos in the threat state, certainly cause temporary fluctuations in the perceptions of both threat intentions and capabilities. Notwithstanding the appearances of the diplomatic initiatives and the actual circumstances in the Soviet empire, the threat has

a formidable military capability. If cooler heads prevail, this capability will be the governing fact to influence security policy of alliance states. Even if the Soviet Union exceeded promised force structure reductions, and reduced her force levels to a level that would provide only defensive capability, the external perception of the threat should change very little. The Soviet Union is such a vast state that she would be threatening to her neighbors at minimum defensive force levels. In fact, forces much larger than this hypothetical limiting condition are probable. Thus, the threat condition appears to be stable.

If the threat is stable, then the basis for the alliance is stable as long as a common interest in collective security through deterrence exists. Among wealthy states with far reaching interests, only the United States and the Soviet Union could even contemplate unilateral security without allies. Neither do so because of the fear of becoming an isolated state without a common type of state in the community of nations, and the desire to avoid being on the frontier along as much of the periphery of the East-West rivalry as possible. All other states must seek collective security, run the risk by being neutral, or simply run the risk without even the fig leaf of neutrality. Wealthy states seem less inclined to risk their security on inadequate unilateral or non-aligned defensive postures than do poorer states. Of the wealthy states only those few with long traditions of neutrality during hostilities have found the risk acceptable. Perceptions of the need for collective security may be a risk to

alliance maintenance, but is not likely a great risk, because states with a lot to lose can afford the high cost of alliance participation and generally seek the protection.

III. THE NATURE OF DETERRENCE

Deterrence is the only sane objective for a security strategy in the nuclear era. In a nuclear context this is all but self evident, however, however one could question whether the Soviet leadership is of like mind. The Soviet corollary to containment is conquest. They pursue conquest subject to the same constraints of avoiding global war that the United States pursues containment. Since they have demonstrated an offensive strategic objective, they are evidently deterred from pursuing a larger objective by the consequences. As long as they are deterred from pursuing conquest in direct confrontation they will seek to deter the west from attacking them.

Because it is capable of varied definition and implementation strategies, deterrence may also be the most difficult aspect of alliance common interest to maintain over the long term.(14; 32) Those who subscribe to deterrence implicitly accept the status quo of international order with respect to use of military force. Several allied states have substantial grievances, but none have grievances worth going to war over. Japan, Germany and Korea, by virtue of having occupied territory or partitioned nations, have substantially more to redress than the rest of the of U. S. alliance partners have or the U. S. herself has. These states recognize that their reunification and repatriation goals can only be accomplished through peaceful means which is a condition essential to being admitted to a deterrence based alliance.

A deterrence strategy requires an initial defensive posture.

A declaration of an intent not to be the aggressor is an essential policy statement. While this is essential, it is not, diplomatically, very useful in promoting peace because states with intent to be aggressors generally declare the same.(5;370) Also essential for an alliance to have any purpose is the condition that deterrence is subject to protection of vital interests of the member states. Principally, this is protection of the territorial integrity of the member nations. Also included is freedom of international passage of citizens and vessels of the member states. Consistent with deterrence, some encroachment on either interest has been and would be tolerated without an alliance being drawn into war. The above aspects of deterrence are fairly noncontroversial, but from here the development of deterrence grows murky.

The requirement for an initial defensive posture for a deterrent force is obvious. One can not very well achieve deterrence through aggression. Some authors (23;14) would classify punitive strikes designed to demonstrate resolve as deterrence. Such actions may be designed to deter something but cannot be designed for deterrence of war. Axiomatically, one cannot deter war by committing acts of war. An example would be the IDF actions directed at Iraq, Lebanon and Libya. The former was a preemptive offensive strike designed to destroy a capability before it could be fielded, i.e. nuclear weapons. As such it was not deterrent in purpose. The latter two were escalations of lower intensity conflict, terrorism, to a level of technology and org-

anization beyond the capability of the host states. These actions had the effect of deterring subordinate forms of war but at the price of committing acts of war. States like Israel have a defensive strategy, pursue an objective of deterrence most of the time, but quickly resort to preemptive strikes whenever their survival on reasonable conditions is threatened. Those preemptive strikes cannot be misconstrued as somehow supporting an objective of deterrence. For purpose of examining U. S. strategy in support of deterrence of war, preemptive strikes are excluded as being in conflict with the definition of the objective.

Beyond the initial posture, both offense and defense characteristics have been deemed essential to deterrent forces. Conventional wisdom has long held that intercontinental nuclear weapons best serve deterrence if only an offensive capability is maintained.(9:760) Meanwhile, any consideration of projecting offensive conventional power across the Iron Curtain, particularly the Inter-German Border (IGB), is sure to be severely critiqued, especially by allied audiences.(35:7) If either of these force conditions is essential to deterrence, one must be able to discern why opposite force conditions are required at different levels of the spectrum of conflict. Granted, the dictum of intercontinental nuclear war is very much a product of U. S. analysis with allied input. While, the conventional force limitation is a U. S. accommodation of allied sensitivities. These different sources of strategic thought make a rational connection of the apparent contradictions even more necessary to discover their

utility.

The tenet that mutual deterrence through balanced offensive nuclear capabilities is stabilizing while, intercontinental ballistic defenses are destabilizing has been increasingly called into question. The Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy perhaps stated the criticism best:

"Our will is called into question by frequent statements about 'mutual deterrence' that imply we want the Soviets to be able to deter the United States unless the United States has been attacked." (6/64)

If the Soviets launch any of their missiles, they surely want them to succeed. Are they more likely to launch if their missiles will reach their target unhindered or if they will be heavily attrited before arrival? At the conventional level are the Soviets more likely to be deterred from attack if their worst regret is being thrown back to their starting place or if they must also bear the risk of a counteroffensive in Warsaw Pact territory? We seem to be unwilling to advance any military posture or strategy which would put the Soviets at a disadvantage. This flies in the face of peace through strength. Our strategy at both national and alliance levels would appear to be one of accepting punishment at any level of war in order to retain the decision of escalation or surrender for ourselves. A strategy of deterrence rationally requires an initial defensive posture. This requires renunciation of first strike at the intercontinental ballistic missile level of war and renunciation of aggression at all other levels. Beyond this initial posture, the strategy to support a deterrence objective does not appear to be logically limited to either of-

fensive or defensive forms.(6:65)

Some analysts would present deterrence as a separate military doctrine that is coequal with offensive and defensive doctrines.

Military operations can be broken into three different categories: offensive, defensive and deterrent. Offensive doctrines aim to disarm an adversary- to destroy his armed forces. Defensive doctrines aim to deny an adversary the objective he seeks. Deterrent doctrines aim to punish an aggressor-to raise his costs without reference to reducing one's own. (23:14)

This triple subdivision of military purposes will not bear examination. It is much more than idle misclassification. Inadvertent reliance on the classification of deterrence as a military mission or operation bears great risk for the strategist. Deterrence as a military mission has no resultant effect of execution and, therefore, is false security. Deterrence exists only in the mind of the adversary. The most formidable force array may not dissuade an adversary, if he is irrational, miscalculates the force correlation or is under delusions of the moral superiority of his own forces.(14:33) Worse yet, forces postured for deterrence without a complete war fighting strategy may invite attack if an adversary discovers the true circumstances. Offense and defense compel the adversary to do our will or thwart his will by force. Clausewitz defined two forms of action in war: the offense and the defense.(5:84) No new form of war has been invented. Deterrence of war is our premier national security objective, but it is incapable of being a military mission or doctrine. Deterrence can only be achieved through realistic war

plans that provide for employment of credible military force in offensive and defensive actions.

Without a war fighting strategy to employ credible military force through offensive and defensive operations, posturing military forces for deterrence is bluffing. Taking such naked risk with issues of war and peace is something no national leader or military commander can ever consciously consider. If deterrence is erroneously defined as a military operation, rather than as a national objective, the possibility of unconscious consideration of such an empty strategy is too high.

If deterrence was a valid military operation, the closest related concept would be deception. Deception has long been used by nations to conceal weakness or their intentions and, thereby, produce opportunities for success.(5:202) Deception is never a stand alone plan, but is always a part of a larger plan for an offensive or defensive operation. The offensive or defensive operation produces the result while the deception creates the opportunity by causing the opponent to misuse his forces.(5:203) Deception can be used strategically as well as operationally on the battlefield. Hence, deception has a valid place in maintaining a deterrent posture. We must avoid deceiving ourselves with a strategy that is based on deception and has no war fighting utility.

IV. THE LIMITATION OF OUR CONVENTIONAL FORCE STRATEGY

The deterrence objective depends on linkage of conventional and nuclear force employment strategies in a rational way.(26;160) Western strategies naturally developed on this basis because the alliances were formed in an era when U. S. nuclear superiority was sufficient to be a credible response to any level of threat aggression.(26;34) The NATO strategy of Flexible Response is the best known and clearest expression of the linkage of nuclear escalation threat to deter conventional aggression.(26;186) Nuclear parity has cast increasing doubt on the utility of nuclear weapons to deter anything but a nuclear attack or blackmail from the threat of such an attack.(2;5) An argument will be developed in following sections that a nuclear response to conventional aggression is not rational. If true, this argument limits but does not eliminate the utility of nuclear deterrence to conventional aggression.

Professor John Mearsheimer argues forcefully that the consequences of nuclear escalation are so great that a very low probability of escalation still produces great deterrence value.(42) His argument follows the probabilistic form that the expected regret of an event is equal to the probability of occurrence of the event multiplied by the consequences of the event. The consequences of a nuclear holocaust are incalculable and are nearly infinite with respect to state interests. Any probability of escalation, even an infinitesimal one, multiplied by infinite consequences still yields a very large expected regret, which is

the deterrence value. In his theoretical analysis of the nature of war Clausewitz concluded that war in the abstract would escalate to the extreme limit of capability of the opponents to a condition of absolute or total war.(5:77) War does not occur in the abstract. Clausewitz proceeded to develop many reasons why wars become limited in spite of the natural tendency to escalate. (5:78) Unless the Clausewitzian hypothesis on the tendency to escalate can be refuted (something no one has successfully done) there is some probability of escalation. The limiting factors he described are the factors that keep the probability of escalation low.

The probabilities of occurrence of different levels of war are useful to understanding the strategic context. However, the strategist can enhance deterrence only by planning for the circumstances of its failure regardless, of the level of risk that it will fail. Hostilities which are initiated through conventional warfare will be the scenario addressed here. Hostilities which are initiated by nuclear fires are possible and foreseeable which means that they also have some probability of occurrence. Since the purpose here is to address conventional strategy in a nuclear environment, the case of war starting at the nuclear level will not be addressed. Once a general nuclear exchange has occurred, conventional force strategies, like most other things, have no more utility.

In the western world there is nearly universal agreement, that victory is an irrelevant term in a nuclear war. There is less agreement as to whether the strategists of the Soviet Union

are of like mind.(40:100) While it is true, that they have survived very great national sufferings approaching the consequences of nuclear war, they have done so as the defender not as the aggressor. It does not appear that they rationally could conceive benefits from conquest of neighbor states that would outweigh the devastation of their homeland, especially if the industry and infrastructure of the conquered land were ruined in the process.(6:34)

It is less clear, whether either side could consider victory as an outcome of a war that was contained at the conventional level. War has been profitable when major states conquer minor states that are unsupported by alliances with other major states. This is how the great empires were built. This type of war is distinguished for clarity but is irrelevant to the problem at hand, which is war between major states or alliances which both possess tremendous war making potential. Beginning with the Napoleonic Era, aggressor states have not fared well. In the Napoleonic Wars, World War I and World War II, the aggressor states, after spectacular initial gains, were reduced in the end to something less than they were before the war. Meanwhile, their people suffered greatly in the process. The Wars of Unification of German States are the only European wars in which the aggressor achieved material gains. In the latter case Prussia, under Bismarck's strategic guidance, held limited objectives and fought against states with great apparent military potential but weak resolve which was manifested in poor campaign plans and sub-

sequent execution of those plans.(15:186) In the Middle Eastern wars Israel was frequently the attacker, although not with intent of aggression. Their initial force advantage proved decisive in the face of weak Arab resolve and poor campaign plans for their stated objective of the destruction of the State of Israel. In Vietnam the North Vietnamese only had transient force advantage but used time to make American resolve inadequate for the objectives of the war. U. S. campaign planning was consistently befuddled by the requirements for deterring a larger war. Viewed from a perspective of modern wars, an initial force advantage does not appear to be decisive unless the side with greater resource potential has weak resolve and poor campaign plans.

With respect to defending states, victory is more approachable. If victory is defined in terms of the least regret between the choice of defeating an aggressor and capitulation, then victory is achievable. However, the defending states emerged from World War II with nearly as great devastation and erosion of national power as the defeated aggressor states, except for the United States.(15:366) The fact that the United States emerged from World War II with both absolute and relative gains in national power is cause for caution in considering the relevance of victory in war. The United States enjoyed special circumstances of geography and timing in World War II.(15:358) Our homeland was violated only at Pearl Harbor. Our unpreparedness for war and late entry meant that we did not carry the brunt of the war until Germany was exhausted. In the meantime the war with Japan was terminated by escalation. None of these conditions ap-

ply to our current situation. Per force of our post war status, we would be an early entrant in any future global conflict. We have no capability for unilateral escalation. Finally, the range of modern weapons make homeland sanctuary unlikely even at the conventional level.

Other factors that are beyond the special historical settings of the United States' entry into World War II reduce the prospects further. Although The Axis Powers were able to wreak great devastation their combined war potential in terms of population and resources was less than that of the Soviet Union today. World War II was fought with weapons of modern type, but they were of first or second generation design. These weapons pale in comparison to the fourth and fifth generation weapons of the modern era. Granted, cost of the current weapons has constrained the numbers of some systems, particularly aircraft, but this effect has not been uniform. In any case the effectiveness has far offset any decline in numbers. In short victory in absolute terms of the kind the United States produced in World War II does not appear to be possible. The only consideration of victory, that can be contemplated at the conventional level of war is that of a least regret of choice between resistance and capitulation.

At any level of war the choice between resistance and capitulation has a clear decision value. At the conventional level of war both our social beliefs and logic make resistance compelling. One would logically prefer to be a enfeebled free state than a physically intact dominated state. At both tactical and strategic nuclear levels, one has little left to lose in responding in

kind to a prior attack. Response to a Soviet initiated tactical nuclear strike is problematic for alliance unity. Several alliance states, including the United States, would be physically intact and thus have more left to place at risk than frontier states that would be devastated by the tactical strike. Although a tactical strike implies force oriented targetings rather than targetings of cities and industrial base, the result would be largely the same for frontier states, given the indiscriminate nature of Soviet battlefield nuclear warheads and probable targetings.(4;13) The major concern of our allies is whether the United States would respond in the event of such circumstances. (14;479) It is much more plausible that some non-nuclear states would abandon the alliance and sue for peace, than it is for a nuclear capable state, particularly the United States. A non-nuclear state has no capability to influence the outcome once significant nuclear fires have been initiated. Hence, some would reasonably sue for peace in an effort to save their homeland. In doing the same a nuclear state would reveal such a lack of resolve that the nuclear state would be subject to continual nuclear blackmail. Ironically, nuclear blackmail has no potency unless preceded by a strike that is not redressed. In the absence of a prior strike, a threatened state can ignore the threat, and is no worse off than before the threat was made. The state making the threat has no better idea of what the threatened state's response to execution of the threat might be. Conversely, if a nuclear state abandoned an alliance after a nuclear strike in one

of the alliance states in an effort to save his homeland, the logic would be compelling that he would also lose one city in preference to loss of fifty. At this point alliance disintegration would be closely followed by national disintegration. For the nuclear states, particularly the United States, appropriate response at any level of war has less expected regret than does capitulation.

The preceding question of response to Soviet initiated use of tactical nuclear weapons is generally perceived to be hypothetical. It may in fact be a real issue, but the prevalent opinion is that the Soviets have no need for tactical nuclear weapons except to inhibit NATO use of them due to their numerically superior conventional capability.(2:21) This begs the question of whether voluntary first use of nuclear weapons is a rational response to conventional Warsaw Pact aggression. No nation, save Carthage, has been destroyed totally by conventional war. Vanquished nations have suffered dismemberment, domination, repression and genocide at the hands of their conquerors. But all, except Carthage, have survived with their culture, progeny and, generally, their state. All participants in a nuclear conflagration and, perhaps, bystander nations as well face a Carthaginian surrender. Once the nuclear threshold is crossed, containment is much more precarious than is containment at the conventional level. In a European conflict at least four nations have independent control of the nuclear button. North Americans, naturally, tend to see classifications of nuclear weapons as a matter of range. Europeans are much more likely to see the distinction in

terms of warhead size and targetting, if they see any distinction at all. It is certainly true that the best firebreak is the one between war and peace, but the one between conventional and nuclear war is more discrete than is one based on classification of levels of nuclear war.(35:7)

If one sets aside the nuclear conflagration issue with a premise that mutual restraint would prevail and the firebreak would hold for all participants (a tall order) there is still a question of the utility of first use of battlefield nuclear weapons. In a scenario where a Warsaw Pact attack breaches the NATO defenses, and we escalate to tactical nuclear weapons to neutralize their force advantage, have we gained anything? The Soviets could terminate their attack and sue for peace. This is improbable unless their attack was based on the assumption that we wouldn't use battlefield nuclear weapons which would be an incredible blunder. They could continue the attack conventionally. This depends on the concept of hugging, that is having sufficient forces in proximity of NATO forces or alliance populations in order to make attacking them with nuclear weapons improbable. This is also improbable because of the space problem of closing up sufficient force to continue a conventional attack against NATO once their follow on forces were destroyed. Continuation of a conventional offense would be more likely if the NATO first strike were a political resolve demonstration that struck a deep target without damaging the Soviet conventional offensive. The point is that the Soviets would be unlikely to attack convention-

ally without a planned response to nuclear fires. A nuclear fireworks show would be unlikely to change their plan unless it affected the execution of the plan. Lastly, the Soviets could respond in kind to a NATO first use. This is most the likely response. Even though their objective may have been to overwhelm the West with conventional force, they could not reasonably attack a nuclear capable force without a planned response to escalation. This is true, regardless of our peacetime statements pro or con about first use and is the deterrent value of tactical nuclear weapons to inhibit conventional aggression. The deterrence exists because the capability exists. The problem is whether escalation would accrue to our advantage or to the Soviets.

Continuing the scenario of a conventional Warsaw Pact attack against a NATO forward defense, any continental scenario in which the Soviets have superior conventional forces ratios raises questions of who would have the final advantage. Within NATO Flexible Response Doctrine a tactical nuclear strike could be limited to a threatened sector if the Soviets responded with restraint. It would seem much more likely that once the threshold was crossed, then the fires would ripple from the point of initiation until the entire line of defense was consumed. In either case a large gap would exist in the line of contact on both sides. If the ripple effect did not occur, surviving NATO and Warsaw Pact forces would be mutually fixed on the line of contact. Numerous studies indicate that forces subject to attack would be combat ineffective, regardless of offensive or defensive posture, and that immediate maneuver of conventional forces would

be impractical in the zone of damage.(4;27) The Soviets would retain the deployment advantage and could bring up additional forces by the time radiation decay permitted movement through the devastated zone. They would not have to concentrate force to attack through the now undefended zone, and would, therefore, have low risk of repeated battlefield nuclear strikes. The gap on the western side would remain indefinitely because NATO could only generate operational forces to close it through new deployments. It would not matter that the new Soviet forces are probably inferior to the forces previously destroyed because their task would be to overcome territorial forces, surviving combat support units and partisans. It is also a fair question the whether casualty sensitive western democracies or the Soviets who have shown remarkable tolerance for human suffering would be more likely to conventionally reinforce a nuclear devastated battlefield. Increasing the rate of mutual force destruction serves no purpose even at favorable kill ratios unless an advantage is gained. This situation might indeed occur and the Soviets might deliberately initiate it, but we should not bring it upon ourselves through our deliberate planning, especially if we have alternatives.

V. THE RESOURCE TO OVERCOME THE LIMITATION

We do not now have a conventional force alternative to escalation due to lack of capability. The Western Democracies are not deficient because they are at maximum potential. They are deficient in forces because they choose to be deficient.(15:436) No doubt part of the willingness to be deficient is due to attitudes which are based on our past overwhelming nuclear superiority and have not fully adjusted to the reality of nuclear parity. (26:250) Conventional forces exist in two forms, standing forces and mobilization forces. Standing forces are prohibitively expensive to expand to meet the threat capability. Mobilization potential requires planning, identification and preparation for conversion of manpower, plant, equipment and transport to military and military production use. While not cheap, the cost of this pales in comparison to increases in standing forces. A persistent belief that a future war would be a short one and the lack of an employment concept for mobilization forces are, probably, more relevant reasons for the tentative commitment to full mobilization preparedness than is cost. Both sides possess tremendous, globally dispersed arsenals. Except by colossal blunder, lack of resolve or nuclear holocaust, neither side is likely to be rendered into an untenable position without a long exhausting struggle. History is, understandably, full of peacetime contemplation of short future wars.(25:74) Unfortunately, wars are a lot easier to start than they are to stop making the most likely short war scenario the one that we should most dread

to fight.

Apart from the context of a short war, the problem of not having an employment concept for late deploying mobilization forces is, essentially, a circular argument. We don't have the concept because we don't have forces to support it and, conversely, we lack the forces, because we haven't defined the need for them. The outcome of forward defense would likely be decided before late deploying mobilization forces could be available. Mobilization forces are required for a conventional war sequel to forward defense, which we do not now have. Whether the Forward Defense Strategy succeeds or fails the war would not necessarily be concluded. If it succeeds we would certainly not want to escalate for the purpose of terminating the war. The Soviets might or might not escalate. It is plausible that they would not escalate to redeem failure, but would be politically incapable of suing for peace with the implicit admission of a colossal blunder. A conventional force, counteroffensive sequel would be required to avoid a protracted, static border war. More importantly, if forward defense fails then territory must be yielded in an operational defense in depth. Frontier states in an alliance cannot subscribe to such a sequel unless the territory can be recovered in a subsequent phase. Mobilization forces are required for the counteroffensive sequel that would be required to recoup lost ground. Such forces also would provide capability to reinforce the flanks of NATO as well as threaten other areas of the Soviet periphery that might become accessible during the course of the

war.(17:868) Such capability would greatly complicate the Soviets' ability to allocate forces to Western Europe, and, thereby, would increase the chance of success for the initial campaign.

Before relating conventional sequels to our present strategy, it is important to consider whether mobilization preparedness has value to deterrence. This question is important because both Hitler and the Japanese either ignored or discounted the mobilization potential of the United States in World War II. Both were oriented on forces in being and winning victory before mobilization could affect the correlation of forces. Thus, there is historical precedent of a weak standing force posture eroding the credibility of mobilization potential. The economic output of the NATO nations dwarfs that of the Warsaw Pact.(15:436) If one includes our Pacific allies, which would, realistically, be involved in a superpower conflict regardless of where the war started the ratio becomes immense. A good portion of the Warsaw Pact states' economies is committed to military production and basic needs for their populations. This leaves, only, a small portion that is convertible by mobilization.(15:430) To the contrary a large portion of the Western economies is convertible. Obviously, consumer goods economies do not convert to war capacity at full value. However, our economy converted well in World War II and could do so again with planning. Total populations available for military service and production also favor the west.(15:436) Whether this impresses the Soviet leadership is open to opinion. It is important to recognize that economic de-

terminism is the lynchpin of their ideology.(25:57) They may discount the economic potential of the West because of our current lack of commitment to mobilization preparedness, but they will not ignore or overlook the potential. To be credible, standing forces and ready reserves must cause the Soviets to believe, that they could not win, before the mobilization potential could be brought to bear. Our vigorous defense of the first use of battlefield nuclear weapons may speak louder about our lack of resolve to prosecute conventional war than it does to our resolve to escalate. In the process we write off the most decisive advantage we have over the Warsaw Pact.

VI. THE REQUIRED EVOLUTION OF THE STRATEGY

On the surface a proposal for increased reliance on conventional forces would appear to be a call for radical changes in NATO strategy. Fortunately for alliance stability this is not the case. Forward defense is essential glue to hold any alliance together. No frontier state can be expected to maintain alliance, unless its more geographically blessed partners make a genuine commitment to defend the territorial integrity of the frontier state. A more desperate parallel situation faced one of the masters of coalition warfare, when he sought to redress the European balance of power in the Peninsular Campaign of 1812.(12; 131) The Duke of Wellington needed the cooperation of the Portuguese to maintain a toehold on the continent. He could not expect cooperation, unless he committed to forward combat operations, (he did not have nearly sufficient force to attempt a forward territorial defense.) which he did. Although he came much closer to success than he dared hope with his meager force, he prudently prepared for the retreat to Lisbon for the famed Torres Vedras defense.(19;184) During his almost inevitable retreat, the Portuguese people laid waste to the land in front of the French Corps. Wellington could only offer an attempt at forward protection. What he could, confidently, offer was an end state of freedom from external domination. This end state was sufficiently valuable for the Portuguese people to destroy their land in support of achieving it. Although nearly everything in war has changed since the Peninsular Campaign, the inherent nature of defensive

alliances is constant. Protection of territory is the essential initial objective, but an end state of freedom from domination must be the bedrock purpose of the alliance given the low probability of successfully executing a border to border forward defense.

On balance, the current prospects for successful execution of forward defense in Europe are not all bad in spite of the intractable problem maintaining a continuous defense of a extensive border. Giving due respect for their superior numbers and highly regarded operational doctrine, the Soviets have historically been unable to use their numbers to advantage, except during the latter part of World War II and the Suverov era.(17:354-374) Surrogate warfare indicates that western war machines outperform Soviet equipment, particularly in the air.(15:501) This value of this observation must be discounted for differences in combatants. There is always the question of how much is enough. The issue is not that NATO has so little force, for in fact NATO forward forces are quite large, but that the Warsaw Pact is so much larger. Considering the range and lethality of modern firepower, NATO in prepared defenses could well have such terrain dominance that a penetration would be impossible. In his article, "The Theory of the Empty Battlefield", (38) James Schneider presents convincing empirical evidence of the tremendous scale of growth of the area controlled by one soldier or weapons system due to ever increasing range and lethality of firepower. The ever shifting technological balance between firepower and mobility/surviva-

bility may have shifted back toward firepower favoring the more stationary defender. None of the above is convincing, but the possibility of success of forward defense is credible.

Prudently, respecting the numbers that the force correlations indicate, a sequel plan to forward defense is essential. Having a conventional sequel plan does not undermine commitment to forward defense any more than the existence of a nuclear sequel does. In fact, a leader vision of an operational defense in depth could promote flexible thought, that would result in better execution of forward defense. The officer viewpoint that is prevalent today is: "fight X days and for the nukes". X days is usually a relative short number.(34:50) This pessimism risks becoming a self fulfilling prophecy. NATO is a large territory and has numerous natural barriers. The Soviets cannot sweep across it without several operational pauses and may well not be able to project power very far at all in the face of a determined defense. This is only relevant if an end state of freedom from domination is an acceptable alliance objective in the event that the goal of preserving territorial integrity cannot be attained.

A conventional force sequel to forward defense does not frustrate the doctrine of Flexible Response. Whether first use of battlefield nuclear weapons is renounced or not is essentially a diplomatic issue and not a military issue. If the alliance is insecure with foregoing first use, then the declaration of possible first use should be retained. What we say about first use makes no difference to the Soviets. They know we have the capab-

ility and must respect the capability. Even if they believe first use is not to our advantage, they must deal with the possibility of an irrational response and loss of control. Nuclear weapons have deterrent value because they exist, not because of what we say about them. The point is that in a nuclear parity environment we must not be in the position of having to choose between surrender and escalation.

Our first objective in a European War is to defeat the invasion plan. This is essential to wrest the initiative from the Soviets. We are self inhibited from planning beyond the point of stopping the invasion and restoring of alliance territory.(35:7) The most intractable problem that we face is the possibility that the war would not end simply because the defensive alliance objectives have been attained. We cannot rely on the good offices of the Soviet leadership to sue for peace, because their invasion plan went awry. History is full of examples of protracted, static wars developing in the aftermath of failed conquest. NATO is politically inhibited from planning counteroffensive operations. This inhibition is based on the theory that offensive operations regardless of conditions precedent are destabilizing. The political perception is a real obstacle and must be addressed, but the theory is irrational. The Soviets would be extremely foolish to rely on our statements of intent rather than plan against our capabilities.

Flashpoint stability is produced by the West through confidence or stinginess in ceding the advantage in forward forces and

by geography in ceding reinforcement advantage. The tyranny of the mobilization schedule has always been the flashpoint of war in Europe. Historically, once mobilization began diplomatic initiatives to defuse a crisis were impossible because one side would gain an advantage if the other suspended mobilization.(17; 866) The remoteness of the United States removed that instability from the post World War II equation. The Soviets do not expect us to launch a preemptive conventional attack because we lack the capability. Realistic planning of a counteroffensive would not change their expectations.

A plan for an operational counteroffensive would not change the defensive character of the alliance. The nature of the alliance is established by the political goal of deterrence, subject to preservation of territorial integrity. This goal establishes limitations for military plans to support its attainment. Assuming away the capability problem, plans for a preemptive strike to achieve surprise would be highly inappropriate. However, plans for an counteroffensive following a defensive campaign to contain an invasion have no bearing on the character of the alliance.

Some would argue that the retaliation produced by a counteroffensive would enhance deterrence.(17;868) This confuses the issue, because one must again assume incredible naivete on the part of the Soviets to think that their planning is not based on the risk of a counteroffensive. The nearly complete lack of open source Western literature on the subject of war-ending counteroffensive campaigns must give the Soviets cause to wonder. From

that lack they could reasonable conclude that we either have an extremely elaborate deception plan, the purpose of which would not be clear, or that we are not serious about prosecuting a conventional war. To the extent that they might conclude the latter, the lack of discussion of counteroffensives undermines the credibility of the alliance's very considerable investment in conventional forces. This is a very different thing from an incremental increase in deterrence produced by threats of a retaliatory counteroffensive.

A campaign plan to produce an end state in a nuclear scared war against an opponent with vast territories needs extensive study. Since our objective is deterrence, one might be tempted to ask: "Why bother with a difficult problem this far removed from the onset of hostilities?" There are two reasons. The first is deterrence might fail and the war termination problem is filled with risks. Secondly, deterrence is most effective, when it is based on a realistic war fighting strategy. Failure to solve the whole problem risks leaving an evidence trail of detectable weakness in capability or resolve.

A counteroffensive sequel to a successful forward defense must strive to stay within the margin of avoiding escalation and applying sufficient pressure to induce the Soviets to sue for peace. Certain objectives would be highly escalatory. Chiefly, seeking to secure or destroy nuclear delivery systems would appear to be setting up a preemptory nuclear strike. Strategic bombing of infrastructure and population centers, as opposed to

force oriented targets, might create near nuclear effects and lower retaliation inhibitions. Overthrowing the government, World War II style, is implausible because of the vast territory and would bring tremendous pressure to escalate, not to mention possible loss of control of their nuclear systems if the government did collapse. In spite of these problems the Soviets are not without vulnerabilities. They would not want to lose their coerced alliance, buffer states. The USSR is also not a nation state but, rather, is the last of the great colonial empires. It has both assimilated territories, the nation state, and unassimilated territories, the contiguous colonies.(15:502) Prior wars fragmented all of the other European Empires. The Soviet Empire has survived intact except for the reversals suffered during the Russian Civil War following World War I. The risk of fragmentation of both buffer states and territories is the most obvious target to bring measured incremental pressure to bear to induce the Soviet Union to sue for peace. Force oriented campaigns to relieve selected territories of Empire control would be the means to attack the targeted vulnerability. The foregoing is illustrative only; we need much study of how to force termination of a future war.

Although it is alien to the American way of war (31:414) to conclude a war with an indecisive outcome, an offer of terms would obviously precede initiation of a counteroffensive. If terms were rejected, a counteroffensive would most likely be initiated under an open offer of terms for a cease fire. Such a

counteroffensive would, like a counteroffensive to restore alliance territory, require the full mobilization potential of the United States. Both circumstances are foreseeable requirements to prosecute a conventional war.

To the extent that we do not maintain mobilization preparedness, we reveal a lack of resolve to bring a conventional war to a conclusion. This limitation is caused more by our strategic vision of a short war, that would escalate, than by resources. In World War II the United States raised 90 divisions from a standing start. With our present resources and economic wealth we would be able to raise a much larger number. Basic preparation, that isn't nearly as expensive as maintaining standing forces, would enable us to raise mobilization divisions in a much shorter time than in World War II. Several of our allies already provide military training to a large portion of their military age population. All of our allies, also, have vast mobilization potential compared to their standing forces. This is the only resource, that we have which is overwhelming, when compared to the Warsaw Pact capabilities. Mobilization potential is an excellent deterrent weapon because it is not threatening in peace but is decisive in war. In order to be an effective deterrent, our strategy must employ Western economic potential and the potential must be prepared for mobilization.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

If it is not deterred, a future war may be initiated with conventional forces, nuclear forces or both. The attacker will have the choice of weapons and that will not be us. Forward Defense and Flexible Response equip us to meet any of the modes of attack initially. These NATO specific strategies are the essential elements of our other defense commitments as well. Our strategic vision of a short war with nuclear escalation inhibits our ability to plan campaign sequels to the forward defense campaign. We cannot know whether a war that started conventional would stay conventional; there is no adequate precedent. What is clear is that we should not be in the position of being the one forced to escalate. Not only do we precipitate the type of war we should fear the most but we destroy much of what we sought to defend and leave ourselves at a disadvantage if escalation is controlled at the lower end of the spectrum. The prospect of destroying numerically superior forces draws us to escalation, but increasing the intensity of mutual forward force destruction is not advantageous when they have the deployment advantage. We should seek to lower the intensity of forward force destruction consistent with defending as far forward as possible, until we can bring our decisively superior resources to bear.

Counteroffensive sequels to forward defense will be required, regardless of the success or initial failure of forward defense, to meet alliance objectives and produce an end state for war. This applies not only in NATO but across the spectrum of

our defensive alliances. Such a conflict would be global, because the prospects of geographic containment of a conflict that does not escalate are almost nil. Posturing forces for deterrence without a complete warfighting strategy, which recognizes the global nature of a superpower conflict and prepares for the absence of escalation, risks failure of deterrence if their impotence is discovered.

Our allies ask for more than we and they can deliver when they ask for a short regional war with a guaranteed forward defense. That may happen, but a long global war with an end state of freedom from external domination is more likely. As horrible as this alternative sounds, it must be remembered that we are discussing the forced resort of least regret and not the most profitable free will choice. Deterrence is best served by being prepared to deal with the forced resort that would occur in the event of a Warsaw Pact invasion. The strategy can accommodate both the goal and the minimum objective much better than it now does. Conditions on the other side of the frontier should provide the impetus for the alliance to have the political resolve to accommodate a more realistic and complete conventional strategy. In any case, it is far better to discover resiliency of the alliance through peacetime debate than in the face of battle.

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